

# Budget and Administration



## Program Descriptions and Missions

The Budget and Administration team is composed of the functional areas of Engineering, Personnel Management, Computer Support, Budget and Finance, Contracting and General Services, Safety, and Youth Training and Education (Mingo Job Corps).

The mission of the team's sub-components are:

**Engineering:** To provide quality and timely engineering services and maintain a motivated staff through training and use of up-to-date available technology.

**Personnel:** To provide customer-focused consultant and technical services in the areas of human resource management and development that support the Service mission.

**Computer Support:** To provide quality customer service to Region 3 computer users by supporting and enhancing existing systems and researching and planning transitions to new automated systems and technologies.

**Budget and Finance:** To provide informed guidance and instruction on the wide variety of finance and budget related rules, regulations, procedures and programs while maintaining and improving working relationships with field and Regional Office employees.

**Contracting and General Services:** To provide professional, quality services to the Regional Office and field stations congruent with the mission of the Service and contribute to its fulfillment through a motivated, well trained staff using up-to-date technologies and methods.

**Safety:** To provide professional guidance and assistance in promoting all aspects of the Regional safety program to the field and all program areas in accordance with safety procedures, rules and regulations.

**Mingo Job Corps:** To establish and maintain a safe, positive instructional environment which encourages the educational, vocational, and social growth and development of Mingo students and staff.

## Summary of Fiscal Year 1998 Accomplishments

### Engineering

Division personnel participated on a national team to develop service wide accessibility standards for outdoor recreation activities and facilities, and was involved in developing an Internet web page to track, monitor, and report on accessibility compliance of Service facilities. The Division of Engineering is continuing to improve customer service by conduction regular status meetings with Refuge and Fisheries personnel. In addition, Division of Engineers completed plans and specifications for 45 construction and maintenance projects with an estimated value of \$4.8 million.

### Personnel

Employees of the Division worked on the implementation of the most recent iteration of the Federal Personnel Payroll System (FPPS) which also included an on-line automated Time and Attendance Reporting System. Additionally employees worked with Program Division partners in the review and establishment of many new and updated standardized position descriptions. The Division also worked on the implementation and utilization of the Service's new Distance Learning system for providing training to Regional employees.

### Computer Support Group

The Computer Support Group (CSG) improved connectivity in the field by replacing modems and browsers, adding routers, etc. A survey completed by the field personnel after the work completed showed that over 90 percent of the field stations found that their connectivity was improved. A thorough review by an outside vendor was done on the Regional Office Network and a two year plan for updating the RO Network was approved. The Region 3 Help Desk was fully implemented and provided technical support to the 800 users in this Region.

### Budget and Finance

Finance prepared and distributed information on new procedures, reports, etc. for FFS, RDE, Credit Cards, Imprest Funds, TDY travel, PCS travel and other programs coordinated by the Budget and Finance Office. Additionally, Finance Division coordinated the transfer of the all Travel Management Centers (contract travel agents) within the Region in accordance with GSA contract changes. The Division also coordinated training for 329 credit card cardholders and their approving officials in charge redistribution procedures.

## **Contracting and General Services**

The Division of Contracting and General Services issued 220 new cooperative agreements and modified another 125 at a total value of \$4.6 million. One noteworthy accomplishment involved a partnership with Ducks Unlimited and the State of Ohio, where funds were combined to build two contiguous dikes on Lake Erie, one owned by the State of Ohio and the other by the United States.

CGS implemented streamlined procurement processes, utilizing the Commercial Items Acquisition Procedures mandated by the Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act wherever possible to reduce paperwork and the time needed to acquire goods and services and increased our use of the Internet to locate potential vendors. CGS managed a program obligating more than \$18 million in new procurement during Fiscal Year 1998.

CGS continued an ongoing process to co-locate field offices wherever possible with special efforts in the Chicago metropolitan area and Columbia, Missouri. The Property Management Branch performed 24 property management reviews at field stations to ensure proper care and management of federal property.

## **Safety**

Safety Division authored Service policy for chain saw operators, explosives and electrofishing. Safety established and conducted three defensive diving classes for personnel from Region 3, and Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. The Division organized four water craft safety training sessions, training 51 Service employees. Safety Division also spent considerable time on a program sent to us on Continuation of Operation in Emergency Situations. This ongoing program involves frequent coordination and work with the Region's field stations.

## **Mingo Job Corps**

Mingo Job Corps Center has a new placement officer. The incumbent started in October and has already placed more than 20 students on jobs and has verified another 20 students who are working that had terminated before he became the Center's placement officer.

For the past seven months, the Center has been training student in basic firefighting, certifying more than 40 students as Wild Land Firefighters.

A high school program was initiated at the Center and the first student graduated in June '98. The program provides students who are unable to get their General Equivalency Diploma (GED). The program also helps to increase the students' length of stay at the Center, which is a critical factor in how the Department of Labor evaluates the Center's success.

## Goals For Fiscal Year 1999

### ABA General Goals

- Customer Service: Provide seamless administrative support to the field.
- Streamlining: Continue to explore ways to improve and streamline the Regional administrative process.
- Employees: Recruit, train, reward, and retain a quality workforce that reflects the diversity of the nation's population.

### Engineering

- Resource Management: Complete planning and design for Refuge, Fisheries, and BRD resource management projects, identified and funded, in accordance with written criteria provided by the appropriate programs.
- Construction: Complete planning and design for construction funded projects, in accordance with criteria provided in approved Construction Project Worksheets (CPWs), and within agreed schedules.
- Construction Management: Provide construction management and inspection services for all resource management and construction contracts.
- Facility Compliance: Conduct compliance audits and provide environmental compliance guidance to field stations and Regional Office program management.
- Realignment: Continue efforts to adjust workload to meet changing project criteria. Look for opportunities to utilize outside sources to meet peak demands for drafting and construction management services.

## Personnel

- **Position Management:** Prepare more standard position descriptions in concert with client needs, and their addition to the Region's Web-site.
- **Employment Information:** Add more information to the Web-site to assist field stations in becoming more self-sufficient in obtaining information and forms related to Personnel issues, especially relating to new employees.
- **Employee Relations:** Issue an Employee Relations Guide to aid supervisors in documenting and taking disciplinary actions and otherwise dealing with conduct and performance actions. (Assuming the ER Specialist returns to full time from his special assignment.)
- **Standard Operating Procedures:** Update all Personnel SOPs to reflect new automated applications this past year (FPPS) and the new system we will be using for job announcements (USAJOBS).
- **Incentive Awards:** Review the Region's Incentive Awards Program and formulate recommendations for improving the Region's program.

## Computer Support Group

- **Regional Office Network:** Transition to new RO network environment (Ethernet, new/fewer file servers, upgraded network operating system, more efficient WAN infrastructure).
- **Field Office Networks:** Upgrade field office networks and standalone computers for enhanced performance and Y2K compliance.
- **Connectivity:** Improve field office connectivity through implementation of new technological solutions.
- **cc:Mail/Lotus Notes:** Transition to a Y2K compliant cc:Mail system. Develop Regional strategy for cc:Mail/Lotus Notes transition.

## Budget and Finance

- **Customer Service:** Enhance user support customer service. Provide technical advice, policies, guidance, and instructions. Research and develop new technological solutions to improve and enhance performance of automated systems.
- **Travel and Purchase Credit Card:** Implement the new Travel and Purchase Credit Card program in accordance with procedures provided by the Washington Office and NationsBank, and in a manner that limits adverse impact on employees.
- **Reduce Regional imprest funds** in accordance with instructions received from the Washington Division of Finance. Provide alternative means of small purchases as allowed by policy and regulation.

## **Budget and Finance (continued)**

- **Budget Allocation System:** Oversee the implementation of the new Budget Allocation System using guidelines provided by the Budget Office.
- **Fedselect:** Evaluate the Fedselect check writing system as a possible alternative means of making small purchases.
- **Improvements:** Implement new systems, procedures, programs, policies or initiatives for the Federal Financial System, financial reports, Imprest Funds, collections, the travel and purchase credit card programs, travel (including PCS), and various other Finance or Budget related programs or initiatives.

## **Contracting and General Services**

- **Acquisition Goals:** Meet Fiscal Year 1999 acquisition goals for small and disadvantaged businesses.
- **Innovation:** Use innovative methods and procedures to acquire goods and services where normal methods have proven unsuccessful or unproductive.
- **Cooperative Agreements:** Participate in the nationwide effort by the Service to define authorities for various types of grants, cooperative agreements and interagency agreements.

## **Safety**

- **To provide professional guidance and assistance in promoting all aspects of the Regional safety program to the field and all program areas in accordance with safety procedures, rules and regulations.**
- **Information:** Provide managers with up-to-date electronic information to report station inspections, accident and injury statistics, water craft training, etc.
- **Technical Assistance:** Assist supervisors, managers, and collateral safety officers so they can implement proactive safety programs.
- **Boat Operator's Training:** Work with the Fisheries and Wildlife Supervisors to meet the training requirements for boat operators.
- **Collateral Duty Safety Training:** Work with OSHA to set up another training class for collateral duty safety personnel who have not taken the OSHA 600 class.

## **Mingo Job Corps**

- **Communications:** Improve communications both internally and externally.
- **Retention:** Increase the retention of students and reduce the number of AWOLs.
- **Employability:** Enhance the "school-to-work" process.
- **Student Leadership:** Enhance the student leadership process.

## Fiscal Year 1998 Accomplishments

### **New Product Found for Law Enforcement Inspectors**

#### *Division of Safety*

Safety Division located a new product that will help reduce the heat-related health problems for Service law enforcement personnel. A cool-down vest will be used to protect employees from heat-related conditions such as heat stroke and heat exhaustion. The product was inserted in the rewrite of the personal protection equipment section of the Service safety manual. **8/98**

### **Fifty One Trained at Motorboat Operator Certification Course**

#### *Division of Safety*

Motorboat Operator Certification Classes were coordinated by the Safety Division and conducted at the LaCrosse District office, Onalaska, Wisconsin, and conducted at Coralville, Iowa, through the Rock Island Field Office. Fifty-one employees were trained. Twenty-six at LaCrosse, Wis., and 25 at Coralville, Iowa, using a cadre of instructors from Region 3. **8/98**

### **Wide Area Network Established for Minnesota Valley Refuge**

#### *Computer Support Group*

A Wide Area Network connection was installed on computers belonging to Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge and the Friends Of Minnesota Valley Refuge. This connection provides a fast and reliable connection to the Internet for research, partnering efforts, outreach, etc. Their old method of communications via modem was causing them many problems, lost productivity, and frustration. **4/98**

### **New Personnel and Payroll Systems Implemented in Region 3**

#### *Personnel Management*

Region 3 successfully accomplished the Federal Personnel and Payroll System (FPPS) conversion from the Pay/Pers data base in May. Region 3 also successfully accomplished the transition to the Federal Personnel/Payroll System T&A Input System. Both conversions occurred in Pay Period 98-11 (May 10, 1998). **5/98**

### **New Classification Standards Applied to 19 Positions, 11 Titles Changed**

#### *Personnel Management*

Personnel Division applied new classification standards to 19 active position descriptions. The impact of the new standards resulted in title changes for 11 positions covered by the Job Family Standard for Clerical and Technical Accounting and Budget work, GS-0500 series. **6/98**

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